



Upper Gastrointestinal Study (UGI)

Our Mission

At Nicklaus Children's Hospital, it is our mission to inspire hope and promote lifelong health by providing the best care to every child. We focus on family-centered care in order to provide an optimal experience for patients and their families. We believe that parents and guardians play a vital role in the success of this test and want you to have an active role in your child's healthcare. The following information is to help prepare both you and your child for their scheduled exam.

What is a UGI study?

- A UGI is a study that uses an X-ray called Fluoroscopy to help see how the upper gastrointestinal tract is working. It looks closely at the function of the esophagus, stomach and first part of the small intestines where food is digested.
- Because this test uses radiation, *women who are pregnant and any other children are not permitted to be in the room* during the scan. If you are pregnant, please bring another adult who can stay with your child during the scan and/or another adult who can wait in the waiting room with the other children.
- During the test, your child will be asked to lay down on the X-ray table while they drink a liquid called "Barium" while the pictures are being taken. Barium acts as a highlighter to show details of the esophagus and track the direction food goes.
- Many children say that the Barium looks like a milkshake and enjoy when the technologists mix it with another flavor to help make it taste better.
- The amount of time to complete the test is different for each child. Please plan for the test to take approximately 30minutes to at least 1 hour once in the exam room.
- *Take note that your child should not eat or drink anything before the exam.* A staff member will call you ahead of time to provide you with the proper eating and drinking instructions to follow for the day of the exam.

What to Expect the During of the Exam

Step 1: Getting Ready

- A staff member of the Radiology department will walk you from the waiting room to the X-ray exam room.
- Once inside the room, you and your child will see a camera attached to a long table with a video screen behind it.
- Your child will be asked to change into a hospital gown and lay down on the table.

Step 2: Taking Pictures

- The technologist will then move the camera over top of your child's stomach but it never touches them. *Reassure your child this does not hurt.*
- As the technologist takes pictures, your child will need to start drinking the Barium out of a cup with a straw. *Please feel free to bring in any fun, silly straws to help and distract your child as he drinks the barium.*
- Younger children may drink the Barium out of their sippy cup or bottle.
- Once your child is finished drinking the Barium, the technologist takes a few more pictures and the test is complete.



Small Bowel Follow Through

(If requested)

Step 1: Getting Ready

- Once the first part of the UGI study is complete, the second part of the study (small bowel) will take place.
- In order to fully highlight the small intestine, the patient will be asked to drink more liquid called "Barium."
- Your child will remain in a hospital gown and will be asked to lay down on the table once ready to take pictures.

Step 2: Taking Pictures

- Pictures are taken of the abdomen approximately every 30 minutes or as requested by the radiologist. The amount of time to complete the test is different for each child. Please plan for the test to take approximately 1 to 4 hours.
- As the technologist takes pictures, the camera will move over top of your child's stomach but it never touches them. *Reassure your child this does not hurt.*
- The technologist will take pictures of the last part of the child's small bowel and the test is complete.

Step 3: Results

Results will be sent to your doctor usually within 48 hours.

Child Life Specialists

A part of the Child Life Specialist's role in the Radiology Department is to help children and families cope with the anxiety and fear associated with medical procedures. A Child Life Specialist may be available on the day of the exam to provide education and coping strategies. For more information, please contact Nicklaus Children's Hospital's Children's Experiences Department at 305-666-6511 extension 4875 and select #1.